

more—at this point, even more—liberal domestic spending in exchange for giving our Armed Forces what they actually need. Our Commander in Chief and his party have spent huge sums on domestic priorities outside the normal appropriations process without a penny for the Defense Department. Obviously, we won't allow them to now hijack the government funding process as well and take our troops hostage for even more spending.

Protecting America is our job. Republicans will not be bribing our Democratic colleagues with special treats, as if they need to be bargained into defending America. The sooner the Democrats fully accept this reality, the sooner we can get on with the people's business. That goes for both the NDAA and the government funding as well.

TRIBUTE TO ROB PORTMAN

Mr. President, now on one final matter, fewer than 40 miles from Ohio's border with Kentucky, about halfway between Cincinnati and Dayton, is a suburb called Lebanon. The corner of Main Street and Broadway looks much like it did almost a century ago in 1926. That is when a young couple, Robert and Virginia Jones, bought and renovated an unassuming brick building called the Golden Lamb Restaurant and Hotel. But the Golden Lamb's modest exterior conceals major history. Its prime location on the highway between Cincinnati and Columbus made it a key stopover for important travelers.

By 1926, each of our country's eight Presidents from Ohio, plus Henry Clay, plus a long list of other luminaries—every one of them had spent a night at this particular inn or at least broken bread in its dining room.

The Joneses' smalltown American entrepreneurial spirit wrote their family right into the history of American statesmanship. As it turned out, it also started a family tradition because a few years later, those newly minted innkeepers had a daughter named Joan, and then Joan and her husband Bill had their own kids. Although Bill Portman would pass away just a few months before the swearing-in, his son would one day cap an incredible career in government by representing Ohio right here in the U.S. Senate.

As ROB explained in his maiden speech, he spent his own formative years in and around a different family business. Bill risked everything in early middle age to strike out and start an equipment business. Joan kept the books. And the way I have heard it, young ROB's own involvement was about as hands-on as it gets.

There wasn't just no nepotism, there was negative nepotism. One summer break, ROB was put to work grinding old paint off the trucks. Even his supervisor called it "the lowest job in the place."

This whole-team effort grew Portman Equipment from 5 jobs created to more than 300. ROB saw firsthand how growing prosperity, if it is done right, can create big win-wins for both small business owners and well-paid workers.

So there were two family businesses in ROB's bloodline: a crossroads where statesman hashed out consequential decisions and a company that created jobs and helped workers support their families. And our distinguished colleague has spent his career continuing both of those things at an even greater scale.

For decades now, from the executive branch to the House to the Senate, ROB's desk and phone line have been the site of history-changing conversations, just like his grandparents' inn, and he has worked to create a national climate where millions more Main Street entrepreneurs like his father can literally lift up workers and communities.

Now, I suspect that from time to time, ROB has felt like law, economics, and policy may not be so different from grinding paint off of rusty trucks; but the gifts and talents that our friend commands have been making an impact—an incredible impact.

Our future colleague was such a top-notch lawyer that he wound up as a young associate White House counsel and then Director of Legislative Affairs for President Bush 41. Then, he was such a whiz at the legislative process that his Ohio neighbors sent him back to Washington as their Congressman. Then, he was such a leader on economic policy that President Bush 43 made ROB U.S. Trade Representative and then turned around and asked him to run the Office of Management and Budget.

So no wonder ROB fit right in and hit the ground running when he came to the Senate in 2011.

Sometimes our friend even fit in a bit too well. See, ROB has a great talent for impersonations. He had spent several Presidential cycles impersonating some of our prior colleagues for Republican tickets' debate prep. ROB's talent became such an open secret that during the 2000 campaign, Joe Lieberman joked he was going to start dispatching ROB to handle campaign stops in his stead.

But the real reasons for ROB's impact are his deep knowledge, his work ethic, and his passion for finding his way through the thick of each consequential issue.

Our friend's focus on growth and prosperity landed him at the center of the most consequential tax reform in a generation. ROB spearheaded the complex overhaul of international tax policy that passed as part of the 2017 tax bill and helped unlock a literal tidal wave of growth, reinvestment, and job creation.

He spent long nights securing huge bipartisan wins on infrastructure policy—not unlike Ohio statesmen 150 years earlier may have discussed internal improvements around a wooden table at the Golden Lamb.

But ROB isn't just a macro-level policy whiz who focuses on topline numbers. As much as ROB is passionate about growing the overall pie, he also

knows that rising tides don't automatically lift every boat. Sometimes Ohioans and Americans face challenges that call for a special champion. So ROB stepped up. He has been one of this body's sharpest early-warning signals on crises like opioid addiction and human trafficking. He has used Congress' investigative powers to craft solutions, and he has built the relationships to make law.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and its sequels have brought hope to families in Ohio and across the country who have battled the onslaught of opioids. The Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act forced Big Tech, kicking and screaming, to finally crack down on exploitation. And on and on, from international trade to national parks and everything in between.

Even at the tail end of a long session, ROB has been known to linger even longer in the Cloakroom, patiently resolving the last few objections to some final policy he has gotten all the way to the 1-yard line.

But even when you get results at this scale, even when you leave Ohio and our country in a better place, late-night policy vigils eventually lose their luster when you've got an even more appealing home front.

We know ROB loves public service, but we also know that even that passion comes second to his beloved wife and partner Jane and their three kids, Jed, Will, and Sally, who I know ROB considers his proudest accomplishment of all.

For years, Washington's and Ohio's great gain have been their sacrifice. So while the Senate is sorry to lose our friend, we can't be too upset that we now have to repay the favor.

So, ROB, congratulations on your outstanding service.

NOMINATION OF JEFFREY PAUL HOPKINS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm another highly qualified judicial nominee: Jeffrey Hopkins, who has been nominated to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio.

Judge Hopkins received his A.B. from Bowdoin College and his J.D. from the Ohio State University College of Law. After graduating from law school, Hopkins clerked for Judge Alan E. Norris, both on the Ohio Court of Appeals for the Tenth District and on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

For the last 25 years, Judge Jeffrey Hopkins has served with distinction as a Federal bankruptcy judge in the Southern District of Ohio. In this role, Judge Hopkins has presided over approximately 3,000 cases that have gone to verdict or judgement, and he served as chief judge of the district's bankruptcy court from 2014 to 2021. Prior to being appointed to the bench, Judge Hopkins worked as a litigator in private practice and served as Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Southern District of Ohio, where he became chief of the civil division in the U.S. Attorney's Office.